

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5513

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Agriculture & Agricultural Trade & Development, February 23, 1995

**Title:** An act relating to lost and unclaimed horses.

**Brief Description:** Implementing a procedure for determining ownership of lost horses.

**Sponsors:** Senators Rasmussen, McAuliffe, Bauer, Morton, Snyder, Fairley, Swecker, Drew, Wood, Haugen and Roach.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Agriculture & Agricultural Trade & Development: 1/31/95, 2/2/95, 2/23/95 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & AGRICULTURAL TRADE & DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5513 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Loveland, Vice Chair; Bauer, Morton and Snyder.

**Staff:** Erika Lim (786-7488)

**Background:** Cattle or horses at large are considered public nuisances and may be impounded by the local sheriff or the brand inspector. Impounded animals are examined for brands or tattoos. If the animal's owner cannot be identified, it is taken to a public livestock market and, after public notice, sold at auction.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The director may cause an animal that is impounded as a public nuisance to be sold at either a public livestock market sale or other public sale.

This bill applies retroactively as of December 1, 1994. Its provisions expire on July 1, 1995.

There is an emergency clause.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The substitute creates a small window of time during which the director may vary slightly from already-established law regarding lost or stray horses or cattle.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** The bill protects the interests of an animal's legal owner while allowing a finder to eventually become the legal owner.

**Testimony Against:** The bill allows too-easy conversion of horses on open range.

**Testified:** Jim Jesernig, WSDA (pro); Kent Lebsack, WA Cattlemen (pro); Doug Blair, Yakima County Sheriff (con).